

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 6  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

## Pelajar asrama kontak rapat tak perlu kuarantin

Dari Muka 1

Pada masa sama, Radzi berkata, bagi pelajar yang tinggal di asrama dan mempunyai kontak rapat kepada pesakit positif COVID-19 namun tidak bergejala, mereka tidak lagi perlu menjalani kuarantin sendiri dan boleh hadir ke kelas seperti biasa.

"Kami harap semua masyarakat termasuk guru, ibu bapa dan pelajar sekolah supaya sentiasa mematuhi segala SOP yang ditetapkan kerajaan supaya pelajar ini dapat belajar secara bersemuka seperti biasa tanpa menggunakan sistem penggiliran lagi," katanya.

Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob pada 8 Mac lalu mengumumkan Malaysia akan memasuki fasa peralihan

ke endemik bermula 1 April.

Peralihan fasa berkenaan adalah 'strategi keluar' (*exit strategy*) bagi membolehkan rakyat Malaysia kembali ke kehidupan hampir normal selepas dua tahun berperang dengan COVID-19.

Fasa itu adalah fasa sementara sebelum negara beralih ke fasa endemik yang mana ia tertakluk kepada pengumuman yang hanya boleh dibuat Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO).

Mengulas garis panduan berkenaan, Kesatuan Perkhidmatan Perguruan Kebangsaan (NUTP) berharap KPM dapat menyegerakan pembentangan dan pengumuman mengenainya supaya guru boleh merancang perjalanan pengajaran mengikut peraturan baharu itu secepat mungkin.



Murid hadir ke sekolah tanpa penggiliran dan bersemuka dengan guru, bermula semalam ketika tinjauan di Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Seri Ketereh.  
(Foto Nik Abdullah Nik Omar/BH)

Katanya, NUTP juga berharap Kementerian dapat mempertimbangkan untuk mengeneipkan beberapa perkara seperti penjarakan fizikal dan kekangan dalam aktiviti kokurikulum dalam panduan terbaharu itu.

"Kita harap garis panduan 4.0 diumumkan secepat mungkin. Sekarang ada terlalu banyak kekangan yang menyebabkan proses pembelajaran tidak berjalan seperti yang sepatutnya.

"Antara kekangan yang boleh ditamatkan seperti berkaitan dengan penjarakan dan pelaksanaan aktiviti kokurikulum.

"Memandangkan kita sedang menghampiri endemik, saya harap kekangan ini akan di-longgarkan untuk mengoptimumkan proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran (PdP)," katanya.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 7  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Pengoperasian sekolah secara bersemuka sepenuhnya

# Sesi persekolahan penuh tingkat risiko jangkitan

**Kadar peratusan vaksinasi rendah, kepadatan murid dalam bilik darjah perlu diambil kira**

Oleh Ahmad Suhail Adnan  
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**Kuala Lumpur:** Pengoperasian sekolah secara bersemuka sepenuhnya bermula semalam, berisiko meningkatkan penularan jangkitan COVID-19 dalam kalangan murid sekolah rendah yang majoritinya masih belum divaksin.

Pakar kesihatan awam Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, berkata langkah menamatkan sistem penggiliran di sekolah

akan menambah kepadatan murid dalam bilik darjah, sekali gus meningkatkan risiko penularan virus itu.

Katanya, situasi itu membimbangkan khusus bagi murid sekolah rendah berikutan kadar liputan vaksinasi lengkap bagi kanak-kanak hanya 10 peratus, berbanding murid sekolah menengah merekodkan kadar vaksinasi lengkap lebih 92 peratus.

"Isu sesi persekolahan tanpa penggiliran ialah kelas akan lebih padat. Persoalannya, adakah kanak-kanak di sekolah terlindung daripada COVID-19 kerana vaksinasi kanak-kanak masih amat rendah.

"Kita bimbang jangkitan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak, khususnya kes kategori tiga hingga lima meningkat.

"Justeru, penting bagi Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) memantau pola jangkitan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak untuk beberapa minggu akan datang, ma-

nakala ibu bapa perlu segera membawa anak-anak mendapatkan suntikan vaksin," katanya kepada BH, semalam.

Kelmarin, Menteri Kanan Pendidikan, Datuk Dr Radzi Jidin, dilaporkan berkata sesi persekolahan kembali tanpa penggiliran bermula semalam dan kehadiran ke sekolah serta pengoperasian sekolah adalah sama seperti sebelum pandemik.

Mengulas lanjut, Dr Sharifa Ezat berharap KKM meneliti semula perancangan tamatkan pemberian dos pertama vaksin kepada kanak-kanak pada 15 Mei ini, sebaliknya meningkatkan usaha meyakinkan ibu bapa untuk memvaksin anak.

"KKM mungkin boleh kurangkan jumlah pusat pemberian vaksin (PPV) untuk menjimatkan kos, namun perlu sediakan vaksin untuk kanak-kanak dan kekal PPV utama di bandar serta melantik beberapa klinik swasta sebagai PPV kanak-ka-

nan di luar bandar.

"Ini penting untuk mengurangkan risiko 'long COVID' dan sindrom keradangan pelbagai sistem dalam kanak-kanak (MISC)," katanya sambil berharap peraturan pemakaian pelitup mula dalam kelas dikekalkan di sekolah.

Sementara itu, Presiden Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam Malaysia (PPPKAM), Prof Dr Mohamed Rusli Abdullah, menyuarakan Kementerian Pendidikan (KPM) mewajibkan saringan murid bergejala di pintu pagar sekolah bagi meminimumkan risiko penularan COVID-19.

Katanya, KPM perlu mewajibkan hanya murid tanpa gejala boleh hadir ke sekolah, selain memastikan pihak sekolah boleh meletakkan murid yang secara tiba-tiba bergejala di sekolah, diasingkan dan ibu bapa dihubungi untuk membawa pulang anak mereka.

"Saya tidak pasti sama ada se-

Kita bimbang jangkitan dalam kalangan kanak-kanak, khususnya kes kategori tiga hingga lima meningkat

Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, Pakar kesihatan awam UKM



kolah mampu melaksanakan perkara ini, namun KPM sepatutnya sudah mengambil kira semua perkara ini sebelum menamatkan sistem penggiliran di sekolah," katanya.

Mengakui ada pakar kesihatan berbeza pandangan mengenai keperluan mengekalkan sekatan itu dalam fasa peralihan ke endemik, Dr Mohamed Rusli menegaskan, ia masih perlu kerana risiko dan kesan jangkitan berbeza antara individu.

Katanya, risiko pembelajaran bersemuka di sekolah adalah bagi murid berisiko tinggi seperti kanak-kanak obes, diabetes, penyakit jantung atau penyakit keturunan yang berbahaya, dan langkah kesihatan perlu dilaksanakan bagi melindungi kumpulan berkenaan.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO  
 MUKA SURAT : 6  
 RUANGAN : COVID-19

## 12 lagi kematian dicatat kelmarin, Johor tertinggi

**Kuala Lumpur:** Sejumlah 1,403,498 kanak-kanak berumur antara lima dan 11 tahun atau 39.5 peratus daripada populasi dalam kumpulan umur ini sudah menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan untuk Kanak-kanak (PICK-ids) setakat kelmarin.

Menurut laman web COVIDNOW, 366,295 kanak-kanak atau 10.3 peratus daripada kumpulan ini menerima vaksin lengkap.

Bagi remaja berumur 12 hingga 17 tahun pula, 2,871,425 individu atau 92.3 peratus melengkapkan vaksinasi manakala 2,973,462 atau 95.6 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Dalam kalangan populasi dewasa pula 15,970,302 individu atau 67.9 peratus menerima suntikan dos penggalak manakala 22,960,578 atau 97.6 per-

tus melengkapkan dos kedua mereka dan 23,237,257 atau 98.8 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu suntikan.

Kelmarin 79,398 dos vaksin diberikan, terdiri daripada 59,818 dos untuk suntikan kedua, 4,456 suntikan dos penggalak dan 15,124 dos untuk suntikan pertama, menjadikan jumlah kumulatif dos yang diberikan di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan berjumlah 69,570,045.

Sementara itu menurut portal GitHub Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM), 12 kematian dilaporkan kelmarin dengan Johor mencatatkan jumlah kes tertinggi iaitu tiga, diikuti Kedah, Melaka dan Negeri Sembilan dengan masing-masing dua kes.

Pulau Pinang, Sabah dan Selangor pula masing-masing merekodkan satu kes.

## Tiada negeri catat penggunaan katil ICU melebihi 50 peratus

**Kuala Lumpur:** Tiada negeri yang mencatat penggunaan katil Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) melebihi 50 peratus bagi fasiliti kesihatan khusus untuk kes Covid-19, setakat kelmarin.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, bagi kes Covid-19 yang memerlukan penggunaan katil bukan ICU pula, hanya Putrajaya merekodkan penggunaannya melebihi 50 peratus iaitu 53 peratus.

"Bagi pengisian katil di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 Berisiko Rendah (PKRC), hanya Perak mencatat peratusan pengisian melebihi 50 peratus, iaitu 56 peratus.

"Pesakit yang memerlukan alat bantuan pernafasan (ventilator) pula menurun kepada 81 pesakit dengan peratusan

penggunaan ventilator adalah sembilan peratus," katanya dalam satu kenyataannya, semalam.

Mengenai status terkini kes Covid-19 di Malaysia, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, kes sembuh merekodkan 14,346 kes mengatasi jumlah kes baharu iaitu 9,705 kes, menjadikan kes kumulatif penularan virus itu sebanyak 4,382,402 kes.

"Ia membabitkan 9,675 kes jangkitan tempatan serta 30 kes lagi mendapat jangkitan dari luar negara. Sebanyak 134 kes memerlukan rawatan ICU (72 kes disahkan Covid-19, 62 kes disyaki, kemungkinan dan kes dalam siasatan)," katanya.

Beliau berkata, daripada jumlah kes harian yang dilaporkan kelmarin, kategori satu

mencatatkan kes paling tinggi iaitu 5,003 diikuti kategori dua



NUR Qaseh Qaireen Nazri, 7, ditemani ibunya Norli Desa, 45, dan kakaknya Nur Aqeela Qaireen, 8, ketika mendapatkan suntikan vaksin COVID-19 menerusi Program Imunisasi COVID-19 Kebangsaan Kanak-kanak (PICKids) semasa tinjauan di sebuah klinik swasta semalam.

(4,653 kes), kategori lima (18 kes), kategori tiga (16 kes) serta kategori empat (15 kes).

"Sebanyak 331 kes Covid-19 dimasukkan ke hospital semalam (kelmarin) dengan 146 kes atau 44.1 peratus adalah kategori tiga, empat dan lima manakala selebihnya 185 kes atau 55.9 peratus adalah kategori satu dan dua.

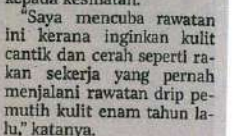
"Dalam pada itu, daripada 49 kes Covid-19 kategori tiga hinggalima, sebanyak 17 kes tidak divaksinasi atau belum lengkap divaksinasi, 15 kes menerima dua dos vaksin Covid-19 tetapi belum menerima dos penggalak, 17 kes menerima dos penggalak, 29 kes berusia 60 tahun dan ke atas, 27 kes mempunyai komorbid dan satu kes ibu mengandung," katanya.

Katanya, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) turut mengenal pasti 10 kluster baharu kelmarin menjadikan kluster aktif setakat ini ialah 116 kluster.

**Putrajaya rekod penggunaan katil bukan ICU 53 peratus**

# **PETAKA DOKTOR TIKTOK**

## **Cecair drip pemutih** **campur janin bayi**



AKHBAR : KOSMO  
MUKA SURAT : 4  
RUANGAN : NEGARA

## 14,346 sembuh, atasi kes baharu

**PUTRAJAYA** – Jangkitan Covid-19 kelmarin mencatatkan 9,705 kes termasuk 30 kes import menjadikan jumlah kes seluruh kes sebanyak 4,382,402 kes.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, kes sembuh pula merekodkan 14,346 kes dengan jumlah kumulatif 4,238,471 kes.

"Mengikut pecahan kes harian, kategori 1 sebanyak 4,653 kes (47.95 peratus), kategori 2 sebanyak 5,003 kes (51.55 peratus),

kategori 3 sebanyak 16 kes (0.16 peratus), kategori 4 sebanyak 15 kes (0.15 peratus) dan kategori 5 18 kes (0.19 peratus).

"Daripada 49 kes kategori tiga, empat dan lima, 17 kes (34.69 peratus) tidak divaksinasi atau belum lengkap divaksinasi, 15 kes (30.61 peratus) telah menerima dua dos vaksin Covid-19 tetapi belum menerima dos penggalak dan 17 kes (34.69 peratus) telah menerima dos penggalak.

"Selain itu, 29 kes (59.18 per-

tus) berusia 60 tahun dan ke atas, 27 kes (55.10 peratus) mempunyai komorbid dan satu kes (2.04 peratus) ibu mengandung," katanya dalam kenyataan semalam.

Sementara itu, terdapat 16 kes kematian Covid-19 dilaporkan menjadikan jumlah kematian terkini sebanyak 35,397 kes serta sebanyak lima kes meninggal dunia di luar hospital atau *brought-in-dead* (BID) dengan jumlah kes BID sebanyak 7,478 kes.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 32

RUANGAN : NEGERI .SELANGOR/KL.KELANTAN

### Kes Covid-19 di Selangor kekal lebih 6,000

SHAH ALAM - Jumlah kes Covid-19 di Selangor kembali meningkat kepada 6,568 kes setakat jam 11.59 malam pada Sabtu berbanding 6,184 kes sehari sebelumnya.

Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Selangor (JKNS) menerusi satu hantaran di Facebook pada Ahad melaporkan jumlah berkenaan meliputi 6,561 kes komuniti, empat kes penjara dan tiga kes import.

Menurut hantaran tersebut, daerah Petaling menyumbang jumlah kes Covid-19 tertinggi di Selangor iaitu sebanyak 2,374 kes.

Dalam pada itu, JKNS turut memaklumkan daerah yang mencatatkan kes Covid-19 kedua tertinggi di Selangor ialah Hulu Langat iaitu sebanyak 1,008 kes diikuti dengan Gombak (978); Kuala Langat (918) dan Klang (744).

Selain itu, daerah lain terus mencatatkan kes Covid-19 di bawah 300 kes iaitu Sepang sebanyak 238 kes, diikuti dengan Hulu Selangor (185), Kuala Selangor (91) dan Sabak Bernam (37).

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

## Masa untuk delete MySejahtera

APLIKASI MySejahtera menjadi tumpuan ketika ini. Ia bukan mengenai sama ada ia berkesan atau tidak. Atau sama ada aplikasi itu masih relevan ketika negara memasuki fasa endemik. Perebutan kini mengenai hak terhadap aplikasi yang pada mulanya diberikan mandat pembangunannya kepada KPISoft Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. (KPISoft) yang melaksanakan pembangunannya secara percuma.

Semuanya nampak senang dan mudah serta tanpa kos atas nama khidmat sosial. Ia menjadi kelam kabut apabila KPISoft menjadi Entomo Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. (Entomo). Hak intelek MySejahtera telah disewa kepada MySejahtera Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. (MySJ) pada harga RM338.6 juta sehingga akhir 2025.

Sekarang, Kementerian Kesihatan mahu membeli hak aplikasi yang sebelum ini dianggap dibina secara percuma untuk kerajaan. Ia seperti Tipah tertipu. Beberapa nama korporat besar dan individu yang berkaitan parti politik menjadi pengarah dalam MySJ seperti didedahkan Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Negara (PAC).

Tumpuan sekarang ialah mengenai pemberian kontrak secara rundingan terus kepada MySJ Sdn. Bhd. oleh kerajaan pada November 2021 dan status rundingan kerajaan dengan syarikat itu. Siasatan juga bagi mengetahui sama ada ada pihak membuat duit 'atas angin' serta keselamatan negara berikutan dakwaan pembabit-an syarikat Singapura. Ini kerana ada 38 juta data rakyat dan mereka yang tinggal di Malaysia dalam pangkalan data aplikasi itu.

Kedadaan ini seperti apabila syarikat Singapura Parkway Holdings Ltd. membeli 31 peratus kepentingan dalam hospital Malaysia Pantai Holdings Bhd. pada harga RM312 juta pada 2005. Apa menimbulkan kebimbangan ketika itu, Pantai mempunyai kepentingan dalam Pantai Medivest yang diberikan konsesi khidmat sokongan hospital awam di tiga negeri selama 15 tahun. Pantai juga memiliki 75 peratus kepentingan dalam Fomema Sdn. Bhd. yang diberikan konsesi pemeriksaan pekerja asing selama 15 tahun. Kira-kira 1.2 juta pekerja asing dan data mereka diuruskan Fomema. Ketika itu tibalah hulubalang berkuda putih bernama Khazanah yang akhirnya membeli kepentingan dalam Pantai dan syarikat Singapura Parkway. Ketika itu Khazanah menegaskan pengambilalihan itu Parkway dan Khazanah komited mematuhi semua peraturan dan polisi berkaitan konsesi aset dan pemilikan Bumiputera.

Tetapi harga yang dibayar bagi mengembalikan penguasaan Pantai kepada negara dan memastikan pematuhan konsesi adalah mahal. Syarikat Singapura itu merebut peluang dan menguasai Pantai dan tahu jika ada pihak mahu semula saham itu, mereka perlu membayar harga yang mahal. Itu perniagaan bijak.

Sekarang MySejahtera berada pada situasi hampir sama. Apa yang menjadikan MySejahtera sangat berharga adalah datanya. Maklumat 38 juta data pengguna dan kira-kira 80 juta *check in* setiap hari perjalanan pengguna MySejahtera. Tiada pihak ada data sebanyak itu kecuali jabatan pendaftaran negara. Ia tahu setiap pergerakan kita apabila ditekan *check in*. Pemilik aplikasi itu menggunakan data itu untuk tujuan pemasaran iklan atau memantau pergerakan seseorang. Itu sahaja menjadikan MySejahtera 'king' sangat bernilai.

Pemilik intelek tahu nilai aplikasi itu dan tidak akan berganjak atau menjualnya pada harga kedai pakaian bundle. Kita tidak perlukan aplikasi yang tahu setiap kali kita keluar dari rumah.

Tiba masanya kita membuang "MySejahtera" ke dalam *trash bin* dan *delete* daripada kehidupan kita selama-lamanya.

Mohamad Azlan Jaafar adalah Pengarang Kumpulan Media Mulla Sdn. Bhd.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES  
MUKA SURAT : 3  
RUANGAN : NATION / NEWS

## Only 49 out of 9,705 new infections in severe categories

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Of the 9,705 new daily infections recorded on Saturday, only 49 are in the severe categories.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said 4,653 cases were in Category 1, 5,003 in Category 2, 16 in Category 3, 15 in Category 4 and 18 in Category 5.

He said 30 were imported cases, involving 25 Malaysians and five foreigners.

With the new daily infections, the cumulative number in the country is now 4,382,402.

The national infectivity rate (Rt) is 0.85.

Dr Noor Hisham said of the 49 new cases in categories 3, 4, and 5 reported on April 16, 17 were unvaccinated or partially vaccinated, 15 had received two doses of a vaccine and 17 had obtained a booster dose.

"There were 29 cases involving individuals aged 60 and above, and 27 with comorbidities.

"One case involves a pregnant person.

"Of the 331 cases admitted to the hospital yesterday (Saturday), 185 were in categories 1 and 2.

"The remaining 146 cases were in the severe categories of 3, 4 and 5."

He said 134 patients were admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) with 81 requiring ventilator support.

On recoveries, Dr Noor Hisham said the nation reported 14,346 new recoveries on Saturday, bringing the cumulative number to 4,238,471 or 96.7 per cent of the overall cases.

Malaysia, he said, registered 10 new clusters, bringing the number of active clusters to 116.

Dr Noor Hisham said the bed-use rate in ICUs for Covid-19 patients in states and federal territories (FT) was below 50 per cent, with the national rate at 16

per cent.

As for non-ICU beds, he said only Putrajaya reported more than 50 per cent occupancy at 53 per cent, with the national rate at 20 per cent.

"Only Perak reported an occupancy rate of more than 50 per cent at the Covid-19 quarantine and low-risk treatment centres, at 56 per cent.

"The total utilisation rate was five per cent."

Another 12 fatalities were recorded on Saturday, taking the death toll to 35,408.

Six of them were brought-in-dead cases.

According to data from the Health Ministry's CovidNow and Github portals, Johor recorded the highest number of fatalities with three deaths.

In the past two weeks, seven Covid-19 deaths were reported per one million people in Malaysia. Perlis had the highest number with 23 deaths per one million people.

Meanwhile, 1,403,498 children aged 5 to 11 or 39.1 per cent of the age-group population have received the first vaccine dose since the Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme for Children was launched on Feb 3.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 17

RUANGAN : NEWS / BUSINESS



Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin (centre) at the signing of a memorandum of understanding between YTL Communications Sdn Bhd and First Ambulance Services Sdn Bhd (FAS) in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. YTL Communications chief executive officer Wing K. Lee (second from left) and FAS managing director Steven Penafort (third from right) represented their companies at the signing. With them are (from left) YTL Communications deputy CEO Jacob Yeoh, YTL Corp Bhd executive director Mark Yeoh, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission chairman Datuk Dr Fadhlullah Suhaimi Abdul Malek and YTL Communications chief operating officer Ali Tabassi. PIC BY FATHIL ASRI

#### EMERGENCY CARE

## YTL, FAS team up on smart ambulance service

**KUALA LUMPUR:** First Ambulance Services Sdn Bhd (FAS) has partnered with YTL Communications Sdn Bhd to bring the first fifth-generation (5G) smart ambulance service to Malaysia.

The collaboration aims to provide enhanced emergency care through the YES 5G Smart Ambulance service, enabling remote telemetry of diagnostics and imaging, in addition to extended reality-powered telemedicine service.

Since April 2020, FAS has embraced YTL Communications' YES Fleet to provide 4G-powered telematics solutions and has enjoyed a substantial reduction in vehicle maintenance costs along with improvement in driver and

dispatch efficiency.

With in-vehicle WiFi from YES Fleet, FAS can transmit patient information and diagnostics to a hospital from the ambulance.

FAS managing director Steven Penafort said the data-driven company was excited to use the high-bandwidth and low-latency 5G connectivity to transmit patient health data.

This would include electrocardiography (EKG) telemetry and ultrasound images to the emergency care doctors — while the ambulance is en-route to the hospital — to improve triage time and hospital readiness to care for the patient upon arrival, said Penafort.

"Working with YES, we hope

that the 5G Smart Ambulance service will enable an integrated workflow between ambulances and hospitals for the benefit of patients," he said.

YTL Communications chief executive officer Wing K. Lee said as the first telco in Malaysia to bring 5G services to the people, the company believed firmly in the transformational power of 5G.

"The exciting leapfrog to 5G will enable new possibilities, such as a first-in-Malaysia real-time streaming of ultrasound and EKG telemetry."

This collaboration is in line with the vision of the Health Ministry to improve the overall efficiency and quality of emergency medical services in Malaysia.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

# Seniors open to second booster dose

By **FATIMAH ZAINAL**  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Feeling boosted by the protection offered by the vaccine, many Covid-19-conscious senior citizens say they are receptive to taking a fourth dose.

Leong King Soon, 62, and his wife Barbara Teoh, 60, have hypertension and diabetes respectively and with their comorbidities, they are among the senior citizens now eligible to get a fourth shot of the Covid-19 vaccine.

Leong, who took his first booster in December, said he and his wife have so far not contracted Covid-19.

"I have been in close contact with Covid-19 individuals many times as I work as an industrial machine repairman and go to many factories for my job but so far so good."

"Besides taking the standard operating procedure seriously such as wearing a face mask and frequently washing hands, I really think that the three doses of the

Covid-19 vaccine I took have kept me protected until now.

"So when the time comes for the fourth dose, I will definitely go get it with my wife," said Leong.

He added that Teoh, too, had been in close contact unwittingly with Covid-19-positive friends and relatives but she has also been safe so far.

"She only took her first booster last month as she was ill over the past few months and needed her doctor's clearance," added Leong.

On Thursday, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said senior citizens with comorbidities can get the fourth shot between four and six months after their first booster, while seniors without comorbidities can get a second booster provided they get approval from their doctor.

Seniors who have received their booster dose but have been infected with Covid-19 will be eligible for a fourth shot three months after they recover.

Leong had this to say: "Get the booster for your own protection and ignore all the negative stories that you hear. People don't remember the positive stories but like to hang on to the negative ones."

Trader Saifuddin Omar, 67, who has diabetes and hypertension, also believes that the Covid-19 vaccine he took has protected him from the virus.

"Recently, my daughter and her son, who live with me, got infected but they didn't know until five days later. We all share the same bathroom and eat at the same table but my wife and I didn't get infected."

"My daughter and grandson (aged eight) are fully vaccinated and only suffered mild symptoms," he said.

Saifuddin recalled initially feeling scared last year about taking the vaccine after hearing stories about the side effects.

"But now I see that it does help, I feel encouraged to take the fourth dose of the vaccine and will do so

soon," said Saifuddin, adding that he and his wife had their first booster in January.

Retired teacher B. Parimala, 63, does not have any comorbidities and took her first booster last year.

While seniors without comorbidities can get a second booster with their doctor's approval, Parimala said she would rather wait.

"I was a science teacher so I keep up to date with the latest news about the vaccine."

"I recently read that boosting too often and with the same type of vaccine could reduce one's immunity, especially against new variants."

"So I'd rather wait than go for the second booster now," she said.

Parimala, too, warned against adopting a lackadaisical attitude towards Covid-19.

"Long Covid is no joke. My former colleague has such bad scarring on her lungs that she gets winded just walking a short distance. We should all continue to keep ourselves protected," she said.

## Imperative for pregnant women to get vaccinated, says doctor

By **R. SEKARAN**  
and **LIEW JIA XIAN**  
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

**GEORGE TOWN:** Being pregnant is all the more reason for one to get vaccinated against Covid-19 as soon as possible, says a doctor.

The Health Ministry's medical development division senior assistant director, Dr S. Gunenthira Rao, said people need to shed the misconception that it is risky for pregnant women to get vaccinated as they will have to breastfeed later.

Nothing is further from the truth, as they are at higher risk if not vaccinated since some of them are immuno-compromised (with comorbidities such as cancer, hypertension or diabetes) and will have lower immunity," he said.

He was responding to *The Star's* report on waiter Mohamad Nazri Mohamad Zakaria, 33, whose pregnant wife Nur Syuhada Ahmad Syukri, 26, died of Covid-19 last August. Mohamad Nazri said his wife was five months' pregnant when she died and had yet to register for vaccination.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said as of last August, 70 pregnant Malaysian women had succumbed to Covid-19.

Dr Gunenthira said the ministry's guidelines on Covid-19 vaccination in terms of pregnancy and breastfeeding now clearly state that pregnant women are considered vulnerable and are susceptible to severe Covid-19 infections, especially in the second and third trimester.

He said although most pregnant women are asymptomatic, the need for intensive care unit admission and mechanical ventilation is higher, particularly with the newer Covid-19 variants of concern.

"The guidelines say severe infections in pregnancy were associated with higher risk of pulmonary embolism, iatrogenic prematurity, still births and maternal mortality," he added.

Dr Gunenthira also said the levels of antibodies produced after Covid-19 vaccination are comparable with non-pregnant women as the vaccine-induced immune response results in more antibodies detected in the umbilical cord and breast milk.

"So women should also get the booster shots for better protection during pregnancy," he added.

Separately, Mohamad Nazri, the waiter whose wife died, advised all pregnant women to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

"Getting vaccinated is a way to protect ourselves. Those who are vaccinated will have milder side effects. Since we were unsure of my wife's eligibility back then, we did not register in time when she contracted the disease," he said.

There were 18,277 Covid-19 cases among pregnant women reported in Malaysia from March 2020 to January this year, but based on this year's records (up to Feb 15), there were no more Covid-19 deaths among pregnant women.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 7

RUANGAN : NATION

## More than 1.4 million children have been vaccinated

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A total of 1,403,498 or 39.5% of children aged between five and 11 have received at least one dose of a vaccine under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children.

According to the CovidNow website, 366,295 children or 10.3% have been fully vaccinated.

For adolescents between 12 and 17, 2,871,425 or 92.3% have completed their vaccination while 2,973,462 or 95.6% have received one dose.

Among the adult population, 15,970,302 or 67.9% have received the booster shot while 22,960,578 or 97.6% have completed their second dose and 23,237,257 or 98.8% have received at least one jab.

On Saturday, 79,398 doses of vaccine were administered, comprising 59,818 second jabs, 4,456 booster jabs and 15,124 doses for first shot, bringing the cumulative number of doses given out under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme

to 69,570,045.

According to the Health Ministry's GitHub portal, 12 deaths were reported with Johor recording the highest number of fatalities at three cases, followed by Kedah, Melaka and Negri Sembilan with two cases each.

There was one death each in Penang, Sabah and Selangor.

Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said 14,346 people have recovered from Covid-

19, higher than the number of new cases at 9,705. He said of the new infections, 9,675 were local transmissions with 96.1% involving Malaysians and 3.9% foreigners.

As for 30 imported cases, 83.3% were Malaysians and 16.7% foreigners.

"A total of 331 cases were admitted to the hospital with 146 cases or 44.1% in Categories 3, 4 and 5 while the remaining 185 cases or 55.9% in Categories 1 and 2," he said.

Dr Noor Hisham said Covid-19 patients requiring ventilators dropped to 81 on Saturday with the ventilator usage rate at 9%.

On bed usage at Covid-19 Low-Risk Quarantine and Treatment Centres, Perak recorded 56%, the only state above the 50% mark.

Dr Noor Hisham also said 10 new clusters were detected, bringing the number of active clusters to 116.

The national infectivity rate is at 0.85. — Bernama

AKHBAR : THE SUN ON MONDAY

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

# MySejahtera check-in rates on decline

➤ Poor enforcement and uncertainty on how collected data is used among reasons for falling usage: Expert

■ BY MUHAMMAD YUSRY  
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**PETALING JAYA:** A lack of enforcement and unclear use of data collected are among reasons for the declining rate in MySejahtera check-ins, said Universiti Malaya head of social and preventive medicine Dr Victor Hoe.

He was commenting on a report that MySejahtera averaged about 16.9 million check-ins nationwide

on April 9. It was the lowest in over nine months since July 1, when it recorded 17 million check-ins.

The average daily check-ins at registered premises using the Covid-19 app fell 30.3%, or by 7.4 million. This represents a fall from an average of 24.3 million on March 25, to 16.9 million on April 9.

Hoe said there is a lot of data collected from the MySejahtera check-ins.

"The data on casual contacts

recorded by the system still has to be converted manually to 'close contact' by healthcare workers in the respective districts.

"This is because contact data is too granular as one only checks in at entrances of premises. So, it is difficult to ascertain close contacts from the available data.

"The granular data may still be useful when the number of cases are low, and healthcare workers in districts are able to follow-up on each case."

Hoe said with the increase in the number of cases, the usefulness of the data decreases as healthcare workers cannot follow-up on every case.

He said MySJ Trace data is more useful than the MySejahtera

check-in information as it uses Bluetooth technology to track close contacts, providing for more accurate data collection.

"However, this also has its drawback, as the MySJ Trace data needs to be uploaded manually by users, and people need to turn on their Bluetooth before the app can trace close contacts.

"The MySejahtera check-ins may still be useful in smaller venues, where people stay longer, for example, in a restaurant compared with a supermarket or shopping complex."

Hoe said from a public health point of view, a good contact tracing app will be useful for on-time and accurate identification of close contacts, but the MySejahtera and MySJ Trace are not good enough for that.

He said lower usage of MySejahtera is not because of the app itself, but the legal and privacy issues related to data usage.

On Thursday, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said the decision whether to relax the check-in requirement using the MySejahtera app will be announced within two weeks.

AKHBAR : THE SUN ON MONDAY

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS

## Concern over Muslims with anorexia during fasting month

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Close attention should be given to Muslims diagnosed with anorexia as they may "struggle" to break fast during Ramadan.

Psychiatrist Dr Hijaz Ridzwan said anorexia is an emotional disorder characterised by an obsessive desire to lose weight by refusing to eat.

He said breaking fast can be very challenging for people with anorexia as they often feel uncomfortable,

both physically and psychologically.

"People who are diagnosed with anorexia are usually terrified to eat or gain weight. So, during breaking of fast, they will either undereat or overeat. If they eat too much, they will tend to vomit and then feel guilty about it.

"They might also relapse and doubt whether they would recover from the disorder. It is not easy to deal with anorexia and fasting at the same

time," he said.

Hijaz, who is also an International Islamic University Malaysia lecturer, said 1% of the population have been diagnosed with the disorder, which is commonly found among young women and children as early as 10 years old.

He said factors such as personality issues, underlying mental illness, past traumas and the surrounding environment could lead a person to

suffer from anorexia nervosa.

Hijaz added anorexia patients should be monitored not just by their doctors, but also by those around them.

"Encourage them to go for a group iftar with family or friends. Eating in groups or in public would help deter them from overeating or undereating and helps them form a healthy relationship with food."

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Consultant Dr Fairuz Nazri Abdul Rahman said parents should not give negative comments about their children's weight as it might lead them to go on an unhealthy diet.

Tunku Muhriz, Chancellor Hospital dietician officer Dr Muhammad Azif Azizi Md Noh said specific calories should be given to patients with low body mass index if they still wanted to fast. - Bernama

## Supply at blood bank running low in Ramadan

➤ Continued shortage would impact treatment at medical facilities and may result in cancellation of elective surgeries

■ BY IMAN MUTTAQIN  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia needs 2,000 350ml to 450ml bags of blood a day for about 1,000 patients. But blood collection at the National Blood Centre is heading towards very low levels due to lack of donors since beginning of Ramadan.

The centre's transfusion medicine specialist Dr Maryam Jameelah Aizuddin said total blood collection in the first two weeks of the fasting month was 28% lower than in March.

"In 2019, 743,892 bags of blood were collected nationwide. This fell by 12% in 2020, and if the pattern continues during Ramadan, the blood supply cannot meet demand and will certainly have an impact on treatment since inadequate supplies will result in cancellation or delays in elective surgeries.

"This situation is a challenge when prioritising blood transfusions for patients,

especially those who are dependent on it to treat certain haematological malignancies, which are cancers that begin in blood-forming tissue, such as the bone marrow, or in cells of the immune system. These include diseases such as leukaemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma."

Maryam said the centre and other blood banks nationwide usually anticipate shortages during festive seasons because many donors are unable to give blood during the fasting period. Most people would also take advantage of the long holidays to return to their hometowns.

She added the centres have been actively calling for blood donations on social media and other platforms weeks ahead of Ramadan.

"We have encouraged donors and organisers from religious bodies, private and government sectors and uniformed bodies to continue blood donation programmes throughout the festive month to ensure our stocks are at optimum levels," she said.

However, the centre has seen a shortage in

specific blood types such as A and O. Stock levels of rare blood groups like Rh-negative are also declining.

"O-type blood has to be at safe levels of about 50% of all blood types since it is a universal blood group.

"The blood type can be utilised during emergencies, such as massive bleeding after road crashes, complications during complex surgeries or for mothers facing delivery complications."

She said there are other groups of patients who regularly need blood transfusion such as patients with thalassemia and anaemia due to cancer, end-stage renal failure and burn cases.

Maryam urged donors to give blood after breaking fast.

Donors can visit its centres, including the National Blood Centre in Jalan Tun Razak and Puspanita Donation Suite at Presint 10 in Putrajaya.

These facilities also offer meals for donors who are fasting.

"We encourage the public to come to the centres or any mobile blood stations. Those who are outside Klang Valley can donate at the nearest blood collection centres situated throughout the country," Maryam said.

## Recovery cases above 14,000, says Health DG

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A total of 14,346 recovery Covid-19 cases were reported on Saturday, exceeding the number of new infections at 9,705.

Health Director-General Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said of the total new cases, 9,675 were local transmissions with 96.1% involving locals and 3.9% foreigners.

As for 30 imported cases, 83.3% were locals and 16.7% foreigners.

"A total of 331 patients were admitted to hospitals on Saturday with 146 cases or 44.1% in categories three, four and five. The remaining 185 cases or 55.9% are in categories one and two," Noor Hisham said in a statement yesterday.

Patients requiring ventilators dropped to 8% on Saturday, with the ventilator usage rate at 9%.

Noor Hisham said no state recorded bed usage of more than 50% at intensive care units (ICU), while Putrajaya recorded 53% of non-ICU bed usage.

Only Perak recorded more than 50% at 56% of bed occupancy at low risk quarantine and treatment centres, he added.

He said 10 new clusters were recorded on Saturday, bringing the number of active clusters to 116, adding that the national infectivity rate or Rt value is 0.85.

- Bernama

## More than 2m teens given at least one dose

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A total of 1,403,498 or 39.5% of children aged between five and 11 have received at least one dose of the vaccine under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children as of Saturday.

According to the CovidNOW website, 366,295 children or 10.3% have been fully vaccinated.

For teenagers aged between 12 and 17, 2,871,425 or 92.3% have completed their vaccination, while 2,973,462 or 95.6% have received at least one dose.

Among the adult population, 15,970,302 or 67.9% have received the booster shot, while 22,960,578 or 97.6% have completed their second dose and 23,237,257 or 98.8% received at least one jab.

On Saturday, 79,398 vaccine doses were administered, comprising 59,818 doses for second shot, 4,456 booster jabs and 15,124 first doses, bringing the cumulative number of doses given out under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme to 69,570,045.

According to the Health Ministry's GitHub portal, 12 deaths related to Covid-19 were reported on Saturday, with Johor recording the highest number at three cases, followed by Kedah, Malacca and Negri Sembilan with two cases each.

Penang, Sabah and Selangor recorded one fatality each. - Bernama